

Message Text

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ACTION COME-00

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 EB-07 SY-05 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 /030 W

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R 170459Z NOV 76

FM AMEMBASSY DOHA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2004

C O N F I D E N T I A L DOHA 1223

DEPT ALSO FOR NEA/ARP

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, OPEC, QA

SUBJ: SECURITY FOR OPEC CONFERENCE IN QATAR

REF: DOHA 1221, DOHA 1222

1. DURING COURSE OF MEETING ON OTHER SUBJECTS (REFTELS)
WITH COL GHAZI AL KHATEEB, DIRECTOR OF GENERAL INTELLIGENCE
DEPARTMENT IN QATAR, EMBOFF RAISED QUESTION OF SECURITY DURING
DECEMBER OPEC MEETING IN QATAR. COL AL KHATEEB ANSWERED THAT
ALL PRECAUTIONS WERE BEING TAKEN BY HIS DEPARTMENT, BUT THAT
IN HIS VIEW THE DANGERS WERE BEING OVERDRAWN. ACCORDING TO AL
KHATEEB, QATAR IS "NOT LIKE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES WHERE ANYONE
CAN WALK IN" WITH THE INTENTION OF CAUSING TROUBLE. ACCORDING
TO AL KHATEEB, HIS INTELLIGENCE DEPARTMENT AND NORMAL SECURITY
PROCEDURES OF QATAR POLICE WOULD BE ENOUGH TO DETER ANYONE WITH
IDEAS OF DISRUPTING MEETINGS. HE ADDED THAT SECURITY COULD NEVER
BE COMPLETELY EFFECTIVE (CITING ASSASSINATIONS OF KENNEDYS AND
FAISAL) BUT MAINTAINED THAT QATAR SECURITY IS BETTER THAN THAT
OF ANY OTHER ARAB STATE DUE TO NORMAL STRINGENT ENTRY PROCEDURES
AND GEOGRAPHIC POSITION.

2. COMMENT: NORMALLY STRICT ENTRY REQUIREMENTS AND VISA
REGULATIONS HAVE NOTICEABLY TIGHTENED, AS HAVE OTHER SECURITY
ROUTINES, BUT AL KHATEEB'S CLAIM FOR CREDIT FOR SECURITY
PRECAUTIONS SEEMS A BIT SELF-SERVING.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PROTECTIVE SECURITY, MINISTERIAL MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 NOV 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ellisoob
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976DOHA01223
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760428-0396
From: DOHA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761141/aaaabjar.tel
Line Count: 61
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION COME
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 DOHA 1221, 76 DOHA 1222
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ellisoob
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <27 JUL 2004 by coburnhl>; APPROVED <20 OCT 2004 by ellisoob>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SECURITY FOR OPEC CONFERENCE IN QATAR
TAGS: PINS, QA, OPEC
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006